

In general, site-directed mutagenesis in accordance herewith is performed by first obtaining a single-stranded vector or melting apart of two strands of a double stranded vector which includes within its sequence a DNA sequence which encodes the desired peptide. An oligonucleotide primer bearing the desired mutated sequence is prepared, generally synthetically. This primer is then annealed with the single-stranded vector, and subjected to DNA polymerizing enzymes such as *E. coli* polymerase I Klenow fragment, in order to complete the synthesis of the mutation-bearing strand. Thus, a heteroduplex is formed wherein one strand encodes the original non-mutated sequence and the second strand bears the desired mutation. This heteroduplex vector is then used to transform or transfect appropriate cells, such as *E. coli* cells, and clones are selected which include recombinant vectors bearing the mutated sequence arrangement. A genetic selection scheme was devised by Kunkel *et al.* (1987) to enrich for clones incorporating the mutagenic oligonucleotide. Alternatively, the use of PCRTM with commercially available thermostable enzymes such as *Taq* polymerase may be used to incorporate a mutagenic oligonucleotide primer into an amplified DNA fragment that can then be cloned into an appropriate cloning or expression vector. The PCRTM-mediated mutagenesis procedures of Tomic *et al.* (1990) and Upender *et al.* (1995) provide two examples of such protocols. A PCRTM employing a thermostable ligase in addition to a thermostable polymerase may also be used to incorporate a phosphorylated mutagenic oligonucleotide into an amplified DNA fragment that may then be cloned into an appropriate cloning or expression vector. The mutagenesis procedure described by Michael (1994) provides an example of one such protocol.

In a preferred embodiment of the invention, oligonucleotide-directed mutagenesis may be used to insert or delete amino acid residues within a loop region. For instance, this mutagenic oligonucleotide could be used to delete a proline residue (P120) within loop α 3-4 of the Cry1C protein from EG6346 or *aizawai* strain 7.29:

5' - GCATTTAAAGAATGGGAAGAAGATAATAATCCAGCAACCAGGACCAGAG - 3' (SEQ ID NO:13)

Likewise, this mutagenic oligonucleotide may be used to add an alanine residue between amino acid residues N121 and N122 within loop α 3-4 of the Cry1C protein from EG6346 or *aizawai* strain 7.29:

5' - GCATTTAAAGAATGGGAAGAAGATCCTAATGCAAATCCAGCAACCAGGACCAGAG - 3'

(SEQ ID NO:14)

The preparation of sequence variants of the selected peptide-encoding DNA segments using site-directed mutagenesis is provided as a means of producing potentially useful species and is not meant to be limiting as there are other ways in which sequence variants of peptides and the DNA sequences encoding them may be obtained. For example, recombinant vectors encoding the desired peptide sequence may be treated with mutagenic agents, such as hydroxylamine, to obtain sequence variants.

As used herein, the term "oligonucleotide directed mutagenesis procedure" refers to template-dependent processes and vector-mediated propagation which result in an increase in the concentration of a specific nucleic acid molecule relative to its initial concentration, or in an increase in the concentration of a detectable signal, such as amplification. As used herein, the term "oligonucleotide directed mutagenesis procedure" is intended to refer to a process that involves the template-dependent extension of a primer molecule. The term template dependent process refers to nucleic acid synthesis of an RNA or a DNA molecule wherein the sequence of the newly synthesized strand of nucleic acid is dictated by the well-known rules of complementary base pairing (see, for example, Watson, 1987). Typically, vector mediated methodologies involve the introduction of the nucleic acid fragment into a DNA or RNA vector, the clonal amplification of the vector, and the recovery of the amplified nucleic acid fragment. Examples of such methodologies are provided by U. S. Patent 4,237,224, specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

A number of template dependent processes are available to amplify the target sequences of interest present in a sample. One of the best known amplification methods is the polymerase chain reaction (PCR™) which is described in detail in U. S. Patents 4,683,195, 4,683,202 and 4,800,159, each of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety. Briefly, in PCR™, two primer sequences are prepared which are

complementary to regions on opposite complementary strands of the target sequence. An excess of deoxynucleoside triphosphates are added to a reaction mixture along with a DNA polymerase (e.g., *Taq* polymerase). If the target sequence is present in a sample, the primers will bind to the target and the polymerase will cause the primers to be extended along the target sequence by adding on nucleotides. By raising and lowering the temperature of the reaction mixture, the extended primers will dissociate from the target to form reaction products, excess primers will bind to the target and to the reaction products and the process is repeated. Preferably a reverse transcriptase PCR™ amplification procedure may be performed in order to quantify the amount of mRNA amplified. Polymerase chain reaction methodologies are well known in the art.

Another method for amplification is the ligase chain reaction (referred to as LCR), disclosed in Eur. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. 320,308, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety. In LCR, two complementary probe pairs are prepared, and in the presence of the target sequence, each pair will bind to opposite complementary strands of the target such that they abut. In the presence of a ligase, the two probe pairs will link to form a single unit. By temperature cycling, as in PCR™, bound ligated units dissociate from the target and then serve as "target sequences" for ligation of excess probe pairs. U. S. Patent 4,883,750, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety, describes an alternative method of amplification similar to LCR for binding probe pairs to a target sequence.

Qbeta Replicase, described in PCT Intl. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. PCT/US87/00880, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety, may also be used as still another amplification method in the present invention. In this method, a replicative sequence of RNA which has a region complementary to that of a target is added to a sample in the presence of an RNA polymerase. The polymerase will copy the replicative sequence which can then be detected.

An isothermal amplification method, in which restriction endonucleases and ligases are used to achieve the amplification of target molecules that contain nucleotide 5'-[α-thio]triphosphates in one strand of a restriction site (Walker *et al.*, 1992, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety), may also be useful in the amplification of nucleic acids in the present invention.